

Chapter 5 Cumulative Impacts

5.1 Regulatory Setting

Evidence is increasing that the most disturbing environmental effects may result not from the direct effects of individual projects, but from the cumulative effects of individually minor projects over time. The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) guidance define cumulative effects as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present and reasonable foreseeable future actions, regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions” (40 CFR § 1508.7). Environmental cumulative effects accumulate when the environment does not have enough time to recover to its original condition before another outside action takes place to affect the environment.

Cumulative impacts to resources in the project area may result from residential, commercial, industrial, and highway development, as well as from agricultural development and the conversion to more intensive types of agricultural cultivation. These land use activities can degrade habitat and species diversity through consequences such as displacement and fragmentation of habitats and populations, alteration of hydrology, contamination, erosion, sedimentation, disruption of migration corridors, changes in water quality, and introduction or promotion of predators.

5.2 Past, Current, and Future Planned Projects in this Area

Over the last several years, residents of the Capay Valley have had to contend with changes to their community’s image and popularity. Cache Creek Casino, built as a bingo hall in 1985, has emerged as an important part of the County’s economy and now advertises throughout Northern California. At the same time, increasing housing prices in the Bay Area, Sacramento, and other parts of Yolo County have made relatively low cost agricultural land extremely desirable for new residential developments.

The following residential and business development and community infrastructure projects have been identified within the study area:

- Parker Place – 72 new homes constructed in Esparto
- Country West – 59 new homes constructed in Esparto
- Esperanza Estates – 95 new homes in Esparto

- Cache Creek Casino expanding its facilities to include a hotel, expanded gaming facilities, a spa, a night club, and restaurants.
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- Capay Hills Golf Club is an 18-hole championship golf course that will be located adjacent to Cache Creek Casino. Facilities would include a clubhouse and driving range.

Caltrans has studied and produced environmental documentation for traffic-calming improvements on SR16 in Esparto. Features being considered include curb extensions, bike lanes, wider sidewalks, streetlights, trees, and street furniture. The County has initiated a project to implement some of the traffic calming features in Esparto within the next few years. Currently no funding mechanism has been identified to design and build the total scope of the traffic calming improvements for Esparto.

Caltrans has also studied and produced environmental documentation for traffic-calming improvements on SR16 in Capay. Features considered include curb extensions, bike lanes, wider sidewalks, streetlights, trees, and street furniture. The Cache Creek Casino is currently funding the design and construction of a portion of these improvements.

The Esparto Community Services District filed a Negative Declaration with the State Clearinghouse in February 2004 for improvements to the Esparto Wastewater Treatment Plant. The project is proposed to repair and replace pipes throughout the sewage collection system, replacing the existing lift station with a 900 gallon per minute facility, and construction of a 0.77 ha (1.9 ac) wastewater treatment lagoon.

Projects 8 – 17 are recent Caltrans improvements to SR16 in this area. Some of these, such as left-turn lane striping, are normal maintenance activities. The largest project constructed on the highway recently was the improvement to SR16 in front of Cache Creek Casino, Number 14 on Figure 1.2. This project was partially funded by the Casino and was designed in an anticipation of increased business to the site.

TABLE 9 RELEVANT PAST-PRESENT-FUTURE CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES			
	Name	Description	Timeline
1	Parker Place	Housing Development; 72 Homes	Construction Completed
2	Country West	Housing Development; 59 Homes	Construction Completed
3	Esperanza Estates	Housing Development; 95 Homes	Under Construction
4	Cache Creek Casino Expansion	200 Room Hotel & Expanded Gaming	Construction Completed

5	Capay Hills Golf Club	18 Hole Golf Course, Club House & Driving Range	In Development
6	Esparto Wastewater Treatment Plant	Wastewater Treatment Improvements	In Development
7	SR 16 – Traffic Calming	Improvements in Capay and Esparto	In Development
8	SR 16 – Capay Curve Project	Super elevation and Guardrail – 3 curves	Completed
9	State Route 16 – County Road 85B	Culvert placement and Drainage Improvement	Completed
10	State Route 16 – County Road 89	Install 4-way Flashing Beacon	Completed
12	State Route 16 – County Road 89 ; Tree Removal	Improve Sight Distance	Completed
13	State Route 16 – Esparto – Crosswalks	Crosswalk Striping	Completed
14	State Route 16 – Esparto – Maintenance	Re-stripe Left-turn lanes	Completed
15	State Route 16 – Casino Frontage	Highway Realignment, Curve Correction, Driveway	Completed
16	State Route 16 – County Road 85	Shoulder Improvements in Capay	In Development
17	State Route 16 – County Road 85B	Interchange Improvements	Construction 2005
18	State Route – Interstate 505 Interchange	Signalization and Interchange Improvements	Construction 2005
19	Co Rd 21A + 85 B	Road + Bridge Rehabilitation	Construction scheduled to begin in 2005

5.3 Project Impacts

Potentially significant cumulative impacts have been identified for oak woodland habitat, riparian habitat, Swainson's Hawk foraging habitat, and valley elderberry longhorn beetle habitat.